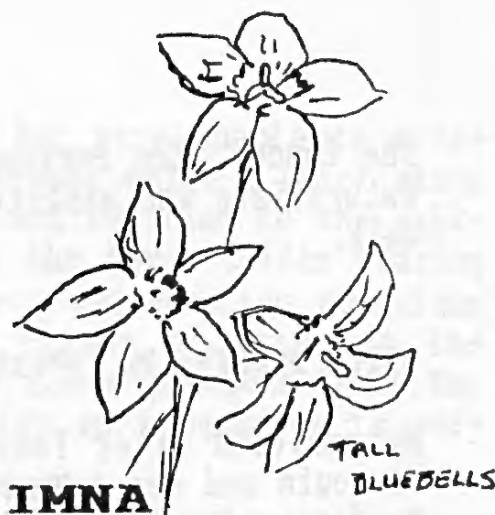


CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

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A WILDFLOWER WALK IN KALIMNA



As the fifty people wound down the Kalimna Circuit Track, someone was heard to remark "What a pleasant way to spend a Saturday afternoon." and it certainly was. The weather was perfect; there was a colourful array of native flowers; there were friendly companions; and there were the enthusiastic and knowledgeable leader, Ern Perkins and his assistants.

It is impossible for a first-time visitor to compare the amount of wildflowers with other seasons, or even earlier in the season, but there appeared to be a wealth of flowers to admire. The yellow-brown Peas (*Dillwynia*), the white Rice Flowers (*Pimelea*) and Milkmaids (*Burchardia*), the yellow buds of Grey Everlasting (*Helichrysum*), the yellow Goodenias, the red Alpine Grevillea, the blue Wahlenbergias, Dianellas and Chocolate Lilies (*Dichopogon*) and many other flowers formed a carpet of colour under the canopy of Eucalypts.

The walk was not solely a plant naming parade, which unfortunately many nature walks become, but was enlivened by short excursions in to the history of the area and a discussion of botanical and geographical features. As examples, Ern pointed out the old gold mining shafts and explained the ethnic origin of round and square shafts. The idea that the round shafts of the Chinese miners eliminated corners in which evil spirits could lurk appealed to many while his alternative explanation, that round shafts were less likely to cave in, was less romantic but may have been more correct. The beneficial effect of a fire on heath plants was demonstrated in an area which had been burnt some five years ago. The area was a profusion of flowering plants. Too frequent burning leads to elimination of some species which are not fire tolerant and a pauperisation of the plant community. In many N.S.W. State Forests the frequent fuel reduction burning-off has led to a monotonous understory of Blady-grass and Bracken Fern.

Castlemaine is fortunate in having such an area as Kalimna preserved so close to the town for all to enjoy. I was also impressed by the lack of rubbish and litter that despoil so many areas. However it is unfortunate that the area is being invaded by exotic and native weeds. Perhaps it is still possible to control such invaders as Cootamundra Wattle before it becomes widespread and affects indigenous plants.

The leader, Ern Perkins, and the other members of the Castlemaine Field Naturalists who assisted him, are to be congratulated on the success of the walk.

Morton Kaveney, Ocean Shores N.S.W. 2483

DRYANDRA FOREST AND STIRLING RANGES

My ambition after leaving Perth was to go to the Dryandra Forest near Narrogin and see a Numbat, so at Poppinyanning after Pingelly we took the Wandering Road, then turned left for Pumphrey's Bridge and the Forest. When we got into the forest I recognised the village, but took the wrong track, which turned out to be better than the one I was after, because there were lots of flowers including the Blue Smoke-bush, which is only found here and in the Stirlings.

To see Numbats we were advised to just drive around slowly and we'd have a good chance of seeing at least one. However, we decided to get out of the car at a spot where there were plenty of hollow logs on the ground, and two of them were seen eventually going off at a fast pace - but it was Doug who saw them, not me! We stayed overnight at Narrogin, and went back in drizzling rain next morning to try our luck again, but although we didn't see any more Numbats we did see lots of birds and despite the fine drizzle, the gully was full of calls.

The next two nights we stayed at the Stirling Range Caravan Park. Outside our cabin there were no lawns, but plenty of natural bush with lots of orchids - Cowslips, a white *Caladenia*, Wallflower Orchids - as well as Bristle-heads, Guinea-flowers, and a very pretty *Hovea* and a *Gompholobium* species in flower. There were quite a number of birds too, but not the Rufous Tree-creeper or the Red-capped Parrots this time.

On our full day we decided to follow the walk set out by the farmer caravan park owners. It went through several vegetation types and was "about 7 km", which I suspected, and allowed for, were farmers' kilometres. We measured the distance from where the track joined the main road the next morning in the car and it was 3 km, and less than $\frac{1}{4}$ the distance of the walk.

We loaded up with lunch, drinks, raincoats, camera, video and binoculars and set off at a quarter to ten.

The first part of the walk is through quite tall trees with low shrubs and herbs under. There were masses of *Caladenia patersonii* var *longicauda*, the Long-tailed Spider-orchid as well as the usual Wallflower Orchids and Cowslips. Peas were in profusion, including some of the Poisons, *Hoveas* and *Chorizemas*. Dryandras and Daisies were also common. Yellow-plumed Honey-eaters and Red Wattlebirds seemed to be the common honeyeaters. There were the usual Twenty-eight Parrots and I saw a pair of Red-capped Parrots. Doug had fun trying to video Mountain Ducks in a nearby paddock.

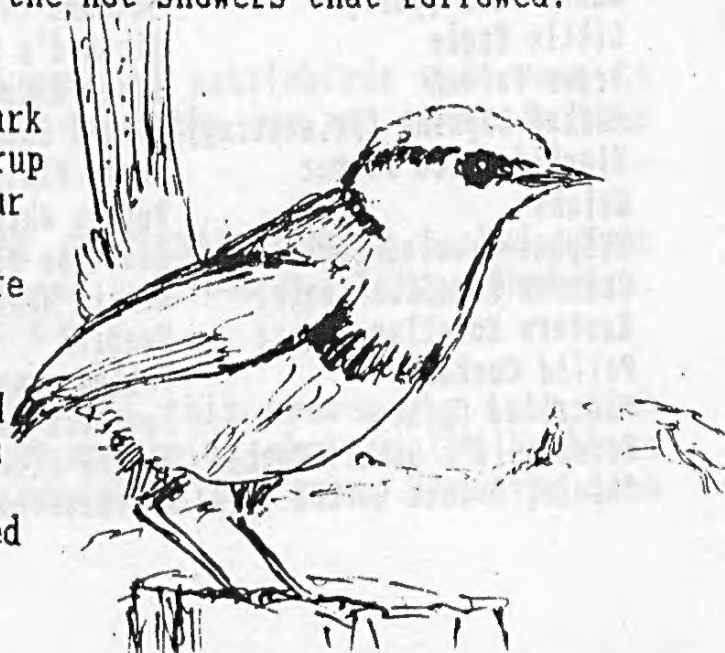
We came to Papa Colla ("paper collar") Creek, but were unable to cross it, so we followed it along, finding our way through quite a thick stand of wattles, to the road bridge, crossing there and returned to the walking trail, which followed the fence-line along the Paper Collar Grazing Company's sheep paddocks. These farmers are very conservation conscious and have left many of the large trees and stands of trees in the paddocks, and the view from the track across these paddocks with the sheep grazing in the foreground and the mountains as a backdrop is very picturesque.

We soon came to an area of heathland towards the top of the rise. Again, there were lots of peas, wattles and daisies, still more orchids and orchid leaves, dryandras and dampiera. One of the prettiest spots was the patch of wattle and dampiera.

Further on we came to an area of mallee with grass trees. One of the mallee species had thick grey/green leaves, but much of it had died and it had sprouted again from the base. The other mallees didn't seem to be affected. There were different shrubs and herbs again in this area, including a really lovely pea which only grew to about 30 cm, and the Hairy Jugflower. We had been following the fence-line to this point but when we got to a gate we turned down the track that led to it and headed back towards the main road. To our right we had a lovely view above a variety of flowering shrubs and grass trees to Mt Trio. Lambertias began to appear about this spot too. As we kept walking, in the rain by this time, there were more and more flowering shrubs and less mallees. Finally, when we were nearing the road we came across Cat's Paws, Dwarf Kangaroo Paw and the lovely red Wreath Leschenaultia. The old road we were going to take back to the creek was overgrown, so we followed the main road back to Papa Colla Creek and then cut through the tall trees at an angle to the Caravan Park, and it was under the trees that I found a Zebra Orchid, as well as another spider orchid similar to a Greencomb, Jug Orchids and a beautiful pink sundew ("rainbows" in W.A.).

We arrived back at the cabin rather damp, and ready for a cuppa, but we both really enjoyed our day - especially the hot showers that followed.

The next day, after a very damp visit to Bluff car park, we returned to the car park near the caravan park, and took the Ongarup Creek walk, which we have done on both our previous visits, but things have changed greatly, and places which were open before are now covered with thick scrub. We had only just started the walk when a male Splendid Wren perched on a fence post and gave us a marvellous view. We saw quite a number of birds on the walk, including a family of Western Spinebills, White-tailed



Black Cockatoos,, Scarlet Robins, and Grey Currawongs. The mass of pink paper Daisies down near the creek weren't open because the day was still quite overcast. On the track back to the car I found some Caladenias, one white and one deep pink. As far as I could tell they were Sugar Orchid and Sugarcandy orchid.

Later, as we drove down the middle of the range on the Stirling Range Scenic Drive the sun came out, and how lovely it was to drive through those rugged mountains with their rocky crests, with heaps of white clouds in a blue sky. It's hard to come to terms with distance in that country. I had the feeling of distance and tall trees, but in fact the mountains are covered with rocks and scrub to about 2 to 3 metres. There are some gullies with tall trees, but they're the exception. For me the outstanding shrubs were the Painted Ladies (a deep pink pea), Scallops (a hakea), red Mountain Peas and the beautiful Scarlet Banksia, which tended to grow in the deeper soils of the flats.

I'd love to spend more time in the Stirlings. I still haven't climbed Mount Trio (climbing in the Stirlings in wet weather is not encouraged) and there's lots of plants I haven't seen yet.

Perhaps, one day !

Rita Mills

SANDON IN OCTOBER 1992

Seen at the bird bath were

Scarlet Robin (pair)
Grey Shrike-thrush
Grey Fantail (pair)

Wrens
Striated Thornbills
Brown Thornbills

Magpies
Grey Currawong (pr, nesting)

On the property were

White-faced Heron
Pacific Black Duck (pair)
Maned Duck (pair)
Little Eagle
Brown Falcon
Masked Lapwing (pr, nesting)
Black-fronted Plover
Galahs
Sulphur-crested Cockatoos
Crimson Rosellas (pair)
Eastern Rosellas (pair)
Pallid Cuckoo
Fantailed Cuckoo
Horsefield's Bronze Cuckoo
Shining Bronze Cuckoo (pr)

Sthn Boobook Owl (heard)
Kookaburra
Welcome Swallow (pair)
Richard's Pipit (pair)
Black-f Cuckoo-shrike (pr)
Hooded Robin (pair)
Jacky Winter
Rufous Whistler (pair)
Restless Flycatcher
Willie Wagtail
Weebill
Yellow-rumped Thornb'l (p,n)
Southern Whiteface
Varied Sittellas
Wh-throated Treecreeper (p)

Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
Fuscous Honeyeater
White-plumed Honeyeater
Brown-headed Honeyeater
White-naped Honeyeater
Spotted pardalotes (pr,n)
Striated pardalotes (pr)
Silvereyes
Olive-backed Oriole
Choughs (nesting)
Aust Magpie Lark (pair)
Dusky Woodswallows (pair)
Australian Ravens

Susanna Starr

OBSERVATIONS

INDIAN MYNAHS (pr) were seen on the Maldon Road; next day one was again seen as a road kill. (GB) They have also been seen in Blakeley's Rd. (RM)

ECHIDNA has been found dead in Kaweka (FB)

GOLDEN POINT NESTING BOXES have been taken over by bees (EK)

HAWKS OVER TEMPLETON STREET. A Black-shouldered Kite was seen over Templeton Street east on the morning of Nov 12th. On the same evening, a Collared Sparrow-hawk (judging from the size, and long narrow notched tail) was seen in the same area, being harried by a magpie. (EP)

BIRD OBSERVATIONS

Red-rump parrots are nesting at Muckleford. (CM)

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes are nesting in the Botanic Gardens (CM)

Young Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes have been seen at Castlemaine Nth. (RM)

Brown Falcon has been seen over Gaulton Street. (MO)

Wood Duck have been seen at Lauriston Reservoir. (KM)

Little Falcon was seen at Lyttleton St, flying to Pines in Mostyn St (GB)

Skylark has again been seen at Clydesdale. (GB)

Sacred Kingfishers have been seen near the creek at the Caravan park

Barn Owl road kill seen at Moolort (Thursday morning excursion)

Purple-crowned Lorikeets were seen at Tullaroop. (Thursday morning excn)

Mopoke calls each night at 9.00 pm along Barkers Creek. (MO)

Rufous Whistler - numerous records from the town area.

RED OXALIS has flowered profusely this year. (EG)

PATTERSON'S CURSE is abundant this year, and flowering profusely in areas where it has not been noted before e.g. the hills near Maldon, near Kyneton, at Winters Flat etc. It is also unusually abundant in other parts of the State e.g. on the granite hills east of Tallarook.

BIRD ORCHIDS are present in parts of Trentham in large numbers. (SB)

RED WATTLEBIRDS COLLECT HAIR OF DOG. A pair of wattlebirds were seen to be collecting hairs combed from a dog. Most of the day was spent in this activity. (BE)

PLANTS SEEN ALONG THE RAILWAY LINE AT CASTLEMAINE NORTH include Spur Velleias, Cut-leaf Goodenia, Loose-flowered Bush-pea and Twiggy Bush-pea. Also many Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters. (RM)

RAINBOW-BEE-EATERS have not been seen at all this season, by some Club members. It is reported that Bee-eaters are being shot in the Northern Territory, and this may explain their scarcity this year. Have you seen this species lately?

ADDITIONS TO THE PLANT LIST

Records are for Diamond Gully (area 5), Taradale (also area 5) or from E. Perkins or S. Starr. The list gives name, common name, area. * = exotic.

Additional species for the list include Sea Lavender (Maldon Cemetery and Castlemaine) and Poison Buttercup (Diamond Gully). Unusual sightings include Italian Cornsalad found at Turpins Falls (the second record for the plant list) and Bristletail Grass from Diamond Gully (third record).

- | | |
|---|--|
| Acaena echinata, Sheep's burr, 5 | *Mentha pulegium, Pennyroyal, 9 |
| Anyema pendula, Drooping Mistletoe, 5 | *Mentha spicata, Spearmint, 89 |
| *Aphanes arvensis, Parsley piert, c5 | Microtis unifolia, Onion Orchid, 2 |
| *Bromus catharticus, Prairie grass, 5 | *Myrsiphyllum asparagoides, Smilax a'gus, 5 |
| *Bromus hordeaceus, Soft brome, 5 | *Oxalis pes-caprae, Sour-sob, 5 |
| *Bromus rubens, Red brome, 5 | *Parentucella latifolia, Common Bartsia, 5 |
| *Bromus sterilis, Barren brome, 5 | *Plantago lanceolata, Flat weed, 5 |
| Caladenia cuculata, Hooded Caladenia, 2 | *Poa annua, Winter grass, 5 |
| Cassinia aculeata, Common Cassinia, 1 | Podolepis jaceoides, Showy Podolepis, 2 |
| *Centaurium tenuiflorum, Centaury, 5 | *Polygonum aviculare, Prostrate knotweed, 5 |
| *Chrysanthemoides monilifera, Boneseed, 5 | *Polypogon mospeliensis, Annual beard-gr, 5 |
| *Cicendia filiformis, Slender cicendia, 5 | Pultenaea laxiflora, Twiggy Bush-pea, 5 |
| *C. quadrangulensis, Square cicendia, 5 | *Prunus nigra, Purple Cherry-plum, 5 |
| Crassula sieberiana, Sieber stonecrop, 5 | Pseudognaphalium luteoalbum, Jersey cudw. 5 |
| Crassula decumbens, Spreading stonecrop, 5 | Psiluris incurvis, Bristle-tail grass, 5 |
| Cymbonotus preissianus, Aus'l Bear's-ear, 1 | *Rostraria cristata, Annual cat's-tail, 5 |
| *Cynodon dactylon, Couch, 5 | *Ranunculus scheropylla, Poison b'rcup, 5 |
| *Dittrichia graveolens, Stink wort, 5 | R. sessiliflorus, Annual buttercup, 5 |
| Dillwynia cinerascens, Grey Parrot-pea, 5 | *Raphanus raphanistrum, Wild radish, 5 |
| Diuris sulphurea, Tiger Orchid, 2 | *Rorippa nasturtiumaquaticum, Water cr, 5 |
| Drosera peltata, Pale sundew, 5 | *Rubus laciniatus ssp selmeri, Blackberry, 5 |
| *Echium plantagineum, Patterson's curse, o5 | *Rumex conglomeratus, Clustered dock, 5 |
| *Ehrharta longiflora, A'l veldt-grass, y5 | *Rumex crispus, Curled dock, 5 |
| Einada nutans, Nodding saltbush, 5 | Schoenus apogon, Common bog-rush, 5 |
| *Erodium botrys, Big heron's-bill, 5 | *Sebaea ovata, Yellow sebaea, 5 |
| Eucalyptus obliqua, Messmate, 5 | *Soliva pterosperma, Jo-jo, X |
| Galium divaricatum, Slender bedstraw, 5. | Stackhousia monogyna, Candles, 2 |
| *Galium aparine, Cleavers, 5 | Stylidium graminifolium, Grass T Plant, 5 |
| Geranium solanderi, Austral crane's-bill, 5 | S. inundatum, Hundreds and Thousands, 1 |
| Goodenia pinnatifida, Cut-leaf goodenia, 5 | *Trifolium dubium, Suckling clover, 5 |
| Gnaphalium indutum, Tiny cudweed, 5 | *T. cernuum, Drooping-flower clover, 5 |
| *Isolopis hystrix, Awned club-rush, 5 | *T. fragiferum, Strawberry clover, 5 |
| Isotome fluviatilis, Swamp Isotome, 5 | *T. glomeratum, Cluster clover, 5 |
| *Juncus capitatus, Capitata rush, 5 | *T. tomentosum, Woolly clover, 5 |
| Juncus holoschoenus, Joint-leaf rush, 5 | *Trilobium acutiflorum, Desmazaria, 5 |
| *Lolium rigidum, Wimmera rye grass, 5 | *Valerianella eriocarpa, It, n Corn Salad, f |
| Luzula meridionalis ssp mer., Wood Rush, 5 | *Vicia hirsuta, Tiny vetch, 5 |
| *Marrubium vulgare, Horehound, 5 | *Verbena bonariensis, Purple Top, c |
| *Medicago polymorpha Burr Medic, 5 | |

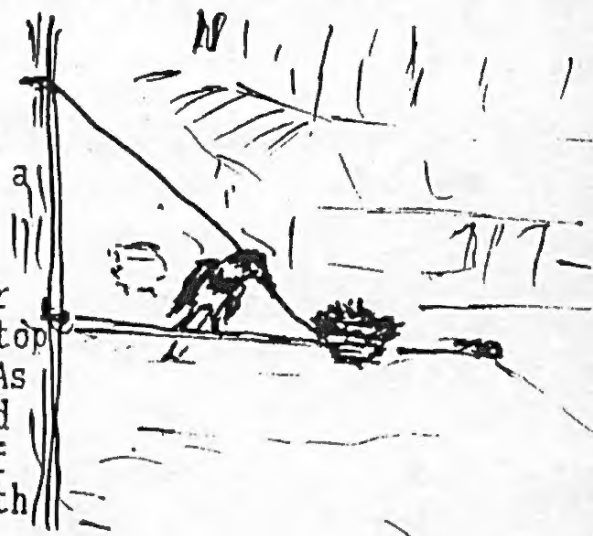
A CITY-WISE MUDDLARK QUITE AT HOME IN BENDIGO

At one of Bendigo's busiest corners I saw a Mudlark (Magpie lark) happily foraging on the footpath, as cheeky and alert as a sparrow or a city pigeon.

Five minutes later it was still at that corner but viewing the traffic from a safer level, atop the cable that delivers power to a tramline. As I crossed the tramtrack myself, the Muddie did an acrobat-like flip of his/her wings and half disappeared. Gaining the safety of the footpath I checked up on the bird again.

Sure enough it was a substantial mud dwelling she/he was occupying, built on the solid foundation of a main cross-arm just where it supported that dangerous-looking electric power-cable. I wonder is that desirable city-centre residence still occupied and by how many? The address again - Up the Pole, as near as possible to Bendigo's famous fountain.

S.B.



BELL'S SWAMP BIRD LIST

Hoary-headed Grebe	Coot	Welcome Swallow
White-faced Heron	Dusky Moorhen	Willie Wagtail
Pacific heron	Masked Lapwing	Rufous Songlark
Sacred Ibis	Galah	Superb Fairy-wren
Pelican x 2	Little Corella	Grey Shrike-thrush
Black Swan	Long-billed Corella	Red Wattlebird
Black Duck	Musk Lorikeet	white-plumed Honeyeater
Grey Teal	Red-rumped Parrot	Magpie Lark
Shoveller	Eastern Rosella	Magpie
White-eyed Duck	Sacred Kingfisher	Australian Raven
Musk Duck	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	

Compiled by Philip West on 28/11/92. Water level good.

MEETINGS: Second Friday of each month (Jan excepted) at Castlemaine High School at 8.00 p.m. Business meetings on the fourth Thursday (Dec excepted) at 7.30 p.m. All members are invited to attend. Visitors are invited to attend the Club's sessions.

SUPPER: Dec J Buntine & B Dare

Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club inc. PO Box 324, Castlemaine 3450.

CASTLEMAINE F.N.C. PROGRAM

Fri 11 Dec. MEMBERS AND VISITORS NIGHT 8 pm at High School. Members are invited to supply a short item for the program, and bring a plate.

Sat 12 Dec. TANG TANG SWAMP. Leave SEC, Mostyn St at 1.30 pm, or Wesley St Nursery, Kangaroo Flat at 2.15 pm. Route is via Eaglehawk Town Hall and Dingee. Take tea and afternoon tea. Leader: G Sitch.

Thurs 17 Dec. THURSDAY BIRDWATCHING BREAKFAST. CFNC/U3A bird-watching excursion at Glenluce. Meet outside Cont Ed., Templeton St at 7.00 am. Take your binoculars and breakfast.

Thurs 21 Jan. DAWN BREAKFAST AT KALIMNA. Meet at Kalimna Point car park (a few hundred metres north of Lyttleton St), half an hour before sunrise. You will need to consult the news or newspaper for sunrise time. Observe the sunrise from the hilltop about 50 metres east of the car park. Take your breakfast.

Thurs 28 Jan. BUSINESS MEETING. 7.30 at 38 Campbell Street.

Fri 21 Feb. WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MEANDER with Rita Mills. 8.00 pm at High School. This is the annual meeting.

Fri 21 Mar. CAPE YORK. Talk by Chris Morris. 8.00 pm, at High School.

Sat 6 - Mon 8 March. TIMBOON CAMPOUT. Combined WVFNCA and VFNCA campout at "Kangaroobie", Princetown. Kangaroobie is a well equipped hostel with bunk-style accommodation. Doonas and pillows are supplied. Program includes Great Ocean Road, Shipwreck Coast, Beach Walks, Flowers and Birds, Bush Walks and Glow Worms. Conducted by Timboon F.N.C. Cost is \$75 which includes accommodation for Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights and all meals from Saturday breakfast to Monday lunch. Previous campouts have hired a bus. Cost would be \$7-8 per day if the bus is filled. Book by 5th February, 1993, to Timboon F.N.C., c/ Mrs Nancy Bryant, RMB Curdie Vale Road, Timboon 3268. Payment to accompany booking. Indicate if you wish to use the bus.

Fri 9 April. NO MEETING (Good Friday)

SUBSCRIPTIONS 1992

Single \$12; Family \$18; Student/pensioner \$8; Supporting member \$20
Newsletter posted: subscription plus \$6

COMMITTEE: B Maund (pres), G Broadway (vp & treas), B Envall (vp), M Oliver (sec), C & C Norwood, S Parnaby, R Mills (editor & public off-icer), K Turner (progams), B Perry, C Morris, and E Perkins (asst newsletter).